

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 8 are amended. Support for the amendments to the claims may be found, for example, in the specification at pages 21-23. No new matter is added.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiners McCommas and Poon at the interview held November 18, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's separate record of the interview.

In view of the forgoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

A. Machida and Kremer

The Office Action rejects claims 1-6 and 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,642,943 to Machida ("Machida") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,003,723 to Kremer et al. ("Kremer"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 recites, in part, "... a cooperation instruction information generating unit for generating second cooperation instruction information if a service processing apparatus, which is requested for executing a service by the service execution requesting unit, performs an error and has become incapable of executing the service, the second cooperation instruction information instructs the cooperative processing apparatus to perform cooperative execution of the service which the service processing apparatus has become incapable of executing and services following it without re-executing previously executed services, and without user intervention." Claim 8 is directed to a method with similar features. Machida and Kremer at least fail to teach or suggest the claimed cooperation instruction information generating unit.

The Office Action, on page 3, acknowledges that Machida fails to disclose the claimed cooperation instruction generating unit for generating second cooperation instruction information. Therefore, the Office Action applies the Kremer reference to address the discrepancies of Kremer as to claims 1 and 8. However, Kremer also fails to teach or suggest the claimed cooperation instruction generating unit.

Kremer merely discloses a printing workflow management system that stores information about capabilities of printing devices in a printing workshop and allows a user to assign capability attributes to various pages of a document. See Kremer, col. 11, lines 53-57 and col. 18, lines 39-67. For example, a user can assign that a given page range or ranges of a document should be printed in color instead of black and white. The printing workflow management system disclosed by Kremer then directs the black and white pages of the document to a device that has the capability to efficiently print black and white documents, but it directs the pages assigned to be printed in color to a device that has the capability to print colored pages. Kremer further discloses that if a "capability is desired but that capability is not available on any of the print resources in the shop or there is too big a queue for the particular resource, the resource allocator can make a determination, either automatically or with manual operator intervention, of how best to print that particular page." Kremer, col. 19, lines 7-12. The printing workflow management system disclosed by Kremer then, based on pre-defined rules, either (1) ignores the assigned page attributes and forces the document to be printed on a single device, (2) routes the pages to other resources with the desired capability, or (3) asks for user instructions. See Kremer, col. 19, lines 12-25.

However, nowhere does Kremer teach or suggest that second cooperation instruction information should be generated if an error occurs and a service processing apparatus becomes incapable of executing a service. The printing workflow management method or system disclosed by Kremer does not disclose, teach or suggest what operation is to be performed when

an error occurs in a service processing apparatus. Kremer merely discloses that "[o]nce the print resource for the page is determined, the page is passed to a distribution engine which transmits the page to the print resource for final output." Kremer, col. 19, lines 23-25. However, Kremer does not disclose, teach or suggest what operation should be performed if, for example, the distribution engine performs an error and is unable to transmit the page to the print resource. Therefore, Kremer at least fails to teach or suggest that second instruction information is generated when a service device performs an error and becomes incapable of executing its service, as recited in claims 1 and 8.

Further, the printing workflow management system disclosed in Kremer does not generate second cooperation instruction information when a device with the desired attributes is not available. Rather, Kremer's workflow management system simply reroutes the document or notifies a user based upon pre-defined rules. However, the method or system disclosed by Kremer does not generate new instruction information when an unexpected error occurs. The claimed instruction information generating unit generates second instruction information based on where the particular error that has occurred, the instructions that have yet to be executed, and the instructions that have already been executed. See specification, pages 21-23. Therefore, Kremer at least fails to teach or suggest that second instruction information is generated, as recited in claims 1 and 8.

Furthermore, the claimed apparatus and method provide a means and process for executing the service that the service processing apparatus has become incapable of executing and the services following it without re-executing previously executed services. The system and method disclosed in Kremer does not teach or suggest a means or method that ensures previously executed services are not re-executed upon the unavailability of a device with the desired attributes. Kremer merely discloses that a resource allocator selects a device with the desired capabilities and then sends the page to a distribution engine that sends the page to a print

device for final output; however, as discussed above, Kremer does not disclose, teach or suggest a system that allows the print job to be performed without re-executing already performed services if an error occurs during the printing process. Therefore, Kremer at least fails to teach or suggest this feature of amended claims 1 and 8.

For at least the reasons stated above, claims 1 and 8 would not have been rendered obvious by Machida and Kremer, individually or in combination. Claims 2-6 and 9-13 variously depend from claims 1 and 8 and, thus, also would not have been rendered obvious by Machida and Kremer, individually or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Machida, Kremer and Ochiai

The Office Action rejects claims 7 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Machida in view of Kremer and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,085,763 to Ochiai et al. ("Ochiai"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

For at least the reasons stated above, Machida and Kremer, individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of amended claims 1 and 8. Further, Ochiai is not applied to address the discrepancies of Machida and Kremer as to amended claims 1 and 8. Therefore, Machida, Kremer and Ochiai, individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of amended claims 1 and 8.

Claims 1 and 8 would not have been rendered obvious by Machida, Kremer and Ochiai, individually or in combination. Claims 7 and 14 variously depend from claims 1 and 8 and, thus, also would not have been rendered obvious by Machida, Kremer and Ochiai, individually or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Nicolas A. Brentlinger
Registration No. 62,211

JAO:NAB/kjl

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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